

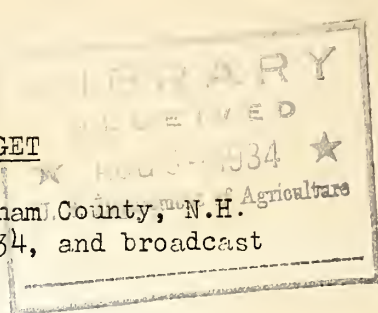
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HOW MY 4-H CLUB WORK HELPED WITH THE FAMILY BUDGET

A radio talk by Evelyn Dobson, 4-H club girl, Rockingham County, N.H. delivered in the National 4-H Club Radio Program, July 7, 1934, and broadcast by a network of 58 associate NBC radio stations.



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You can imagine how club work might help our family when I tell you there are fourteen of us, ten children and four adults. I am 16 years of age, the third oldest.

We live in the fishing village of Seabrook, located on New Hampshire's 18 miles of seacoast. Men in our town used to be fishermen but for the past few years there hasn't been enough work for them all, so many had to go to a city five miles away to work in the shop. My father is one of these men.

My brothers and sisters who are old enough, and I shuck clams to earn money to buy our clothes. It takes four hours to shuck a gallon of clams and earn 30 cents.

It was in 1926 when I first entered 4-H club work. Since then I have taken eight years of clothing, six of food, two years of canning and one year of room improvement. Two of my sisters have taken clothing, food, and canning, and my four brothers have done forestry, shop, poultry, and garden.

When our family began to feel the depression the most, it was then we realized the real value of 4-H club work to our family budget. I had to make use of what I had learned throughout my four years of club work. I darned, patched, and made over clothes for the younger children. I took dresses I had outgrown and remodelled them to fit my little sisters. I found enough material around the house, with what had been given us, to make pants for my brothers. My ripping up and washing old coats I was able to make the younger children jackets and coats. There was enough money to buy cloth, from which I made shirts and blouses for the boys and dresses for myself and older members of the family. I have made and repaired all of my own clothes ever since my first year of club work.

The past two summers I have canned everything I could get. For weeks the past winter and winter before, we practically lived on the canned and stored fruits and vegetables in our cellar. The 100 or more jars of jelly and jam was used on our bread, instead of butter. For seven weeks while my father was on strike, we lived well on our canned stuff. Some of the other strikers' families were eating little more than dry bread.

My four brothers plant and care for a large garden. Their crops have been large enough to last our family until spring. Our potato supply for a year is about 40 bushels; the boys raised 35 of these last year. We used the last of them last month.

The boys took forestry, too, last year and as a result helped to supply the family fuel by cutting wood at halves in a nearby town. They managed to cut enough to last through the hard, cold winter.

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I also do quite a lot of the family cooking. The winter of the depression I made out a menus using the food we had canned, and bought only a few necessary supplies.

Neither agriculture nor home economics is taught in our town schools; so if it had not been for club work my brothers and sisters and I would not have learned how to do all these things. The canning especially has helped out, because few people in our community knew how to can.

The year our leader moved three miles away, we had only a few club meetings because it was difficult for the members to go so far, especially as some of us had to go five miles to high school.

The following year I organized a club of smaller girls and for three years I have taught these girls how to cook and can from the knowledge I received from my club work.

I am sure that all this work would not have been done by my brothers and sisters and myself, if we had not been in 4-H club work. I am glad and so are all my family that I joined the 4-H club and found out what club work was and how it could help us all. I urge every eligible boy and girl to join a 4-H club and find out for themselves what it is and how much it can mean.

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